



Jacob B. Kemmerer

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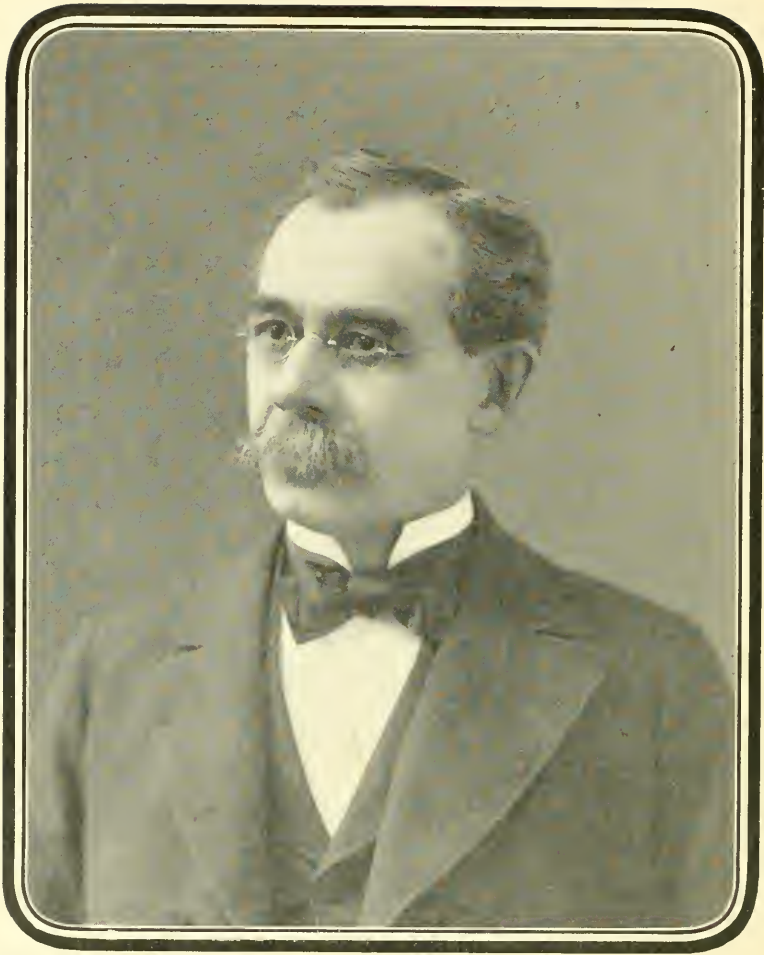
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MEMORIAL

PROCEEDINGS OF THE SENATE

UPON THE DEATH OF

HON. JACOB B. KEMERER,

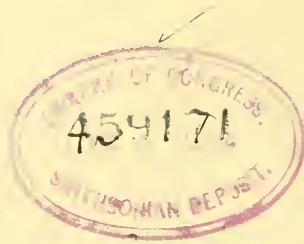
LATE A SENATOR FROM THE EIGHTEENTH DISTRICT

OF

PENNSYLVANIA.

WM. STANLEY RAY,
STATE PRINTER OF PENNSYLVANIA.
1903.

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RESOLUTION.

In the Senate,
March 2, 1903.

Resolved (if the House of Representatives concur), That one thousand five hundred copies of the memorial proceedings of the Senate upon the death of Jacob B. Kemerer, late a member of the Senate from the Eighteenth Senatorial district, be printed and bound in cloth for the use of the Senate.

E. W. SMILEY,
Chief Clerk of the Senate.

The foregoing resolution concurred in March 3, 1903.

THOMAS H. GARVIN,
Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives.

Approved—The 18th day of March, A. D. 1903.

SAML. W. PENNYPACKER.



PROCEEDINGS OF THE SENATE

UPON THE DEATH OF

HON. JACOB B. KEMERER.

In the Senate,
Wednesday, January 7, 1903.

On motion of Senator Danner the following resolution was twice read, considered and agreed to, viz:

Resolved, That a committee of eight members of the Senate be appointed to draft suitable resolutions on the death of the late Senator Jacob B. Kemerer, who died on October sixteenth, one thousand nine hundred and one, and present said resolutions at a special meeting to be held on Wednesday, February third, at three o'clock P. M.

By subsequent action of the Senate the date of the special session was fixed for Wednesday, February twenty-fifth, at three P. M.



MEMORIAL RESOLUTIONS AND ADDRESSES.

In the Senate,
Wednesday, February 25, 1903.
Afternoon Session.

Pursuant to adjournment the Senate was called to order at three o'clock P. M., President Pro Tempore Scott in the chair.

THE PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE. The session this afternoon is held for the purpose of doing honor to the late Jacob Kemerer, a member of the Senate from the county of Northampton.

PRAYER.

Prayer was offered by the Chaplain, Rev. J. Wesley Sullivan, as follows:

Oh Lord, our God, we thank Thee that under all circumstances of life we may come into Thy presence not only in the sunshine but in the shadow, not only when life comes into the world but when it goes out. We thank Thee for Thy wise providence, that ever overshadows us, and for Thy care, not only in time of life but in eternity, and we pray Thee that through these, Thy lessons of death, we may learn Thy providence as the message to the King of old as he lay sick and dying: "Set thy house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live." We are all passing away.

May we so live as to consider that we shall not live forever, but like the king of old and, like all mankind, the hour will come when Thou shalt call on each one of us to say farewell to all that is dear to us in this life and we shall have to stand in Thy presence alone and render unto Thee, our God, an account of our stewardship.

Our desire is that in our day and generation we may be faithful unto Thee and so live in Thy sight and not only in the light of this world but in the light of the great eternity where we shall live forever.

Thou hast called this body together this beautiful afternoon to do honor to one of its members who has passed away. We pray that his memory may be precious in our thought and add inspiration to our lives, and, at this moment, we would remember those to whom he was most precious; those to whom he was dear by the ties of nature; those that remember him to-day, and remember him in the days of the past, may Thy comfort be with them in their sorrow and may their hope be to meet him in the great eternity, to see him in Thy presence and to separate from him no more forever. And, as we pray for Thy blessing upon them, so we pray for Thy blessing upon ourselves and ask Thee that when our work is ended here upon earth that we may also be so happy as to enter into that life everlasting which Thou hast prepared for those that love and serve Thee. And we ask Thee to pardon all our sins in Christ, our Saviour's name, Amen.

Mr. DANNER. Mr. President, as chairman of the committee to prepare resolutions relative to the death of our late member, Jacob B. Kemerer, of the Eighteenth Senatorial district, I beg leave to present the following resolutions:

RESOLUTIONS.

Whereas, In obedience to the summons all must obey, Honorable Jacob B. Kemerer, Senator from the Eighteenth District, after the close of the last session, passed from the busy scenes of life to the repose of peace and eternal rest; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate profoundly regrets the loss sustained by the death of Jacob B. Kemerer, late a member of this body, and extends to the family of the deceased Senator its sincerest condolence in their bereavement.

Resolved, That we desire to give expression of our appreciation of the gentlemanly deportment, the faithful service and the integrity and the ability characteristic of our deceased colleague as a legislator, and deplore the loss of his courteous presence.

Resolved, That a copy of these resolutions, with the action of the Senate thereon, be forwarded to the family of the deceased and, as a further tribute of the respect due to his memory, the Senate do now adjourn.

THOMAS D. DANNER,

J. A. STOBER,

J. C. STINEMAN,

JOHN E. FOX,

WEBSTER GRIM,

ARTHUR G. DEWALT,

JAMES D. EMERY,

Committee.

ADDRESSES.

President Pro Tempore SCOTT. Fellow Senators: It is fitting for me at this time to say a few words concerning the late Senator from Northampton.

Senator Kemerer came to us as a member from the county of Northampton for the session of one thousand eight hundred and ninety-nine. The members of this body who served in that memorable session found Jacob B. Kemerer a quiet, unostentatious and courteous gentleman. He was found to be an able and learned member of the bar and always wil-

ling to give from his store of legal learning that help which many of us require in the conduct of the business of the Legislature of Pennsylvania. He served with distinguished ability and faithfulness on the Committee on Judiciary General during the session, and he was a member of many other committees.

Senator Kemerer was a member of the minority party of that session and he was always a faithful follower of his party.

He was successful in passing legislation for the benefit of his constituents, and if he had lived he would undoubtedly have been renominated and re-elected to the office which he so worthily filled.

Senator Kemerer occupied a distinguished position at the Bar of our State and at the Northampton County Bar. He was ever courteous and kindly to his clients. It has been remarked of him that it was his greatest pleasure as well as his delight to save his clients from protracted litigation by arranging that their controversies should be amicably adjusted among the parties. It seems to me that this is one of the highest duties that a member of the Bar has to perform for his clients; and Senator Kemerer possessed this to a remarkable degree.

He was honored many times by the people of his town tendering to him many local offices. He served as the chief executive officer of his town and gave universal satisfaction to the many citizens whom he represented. He was always endeavoring to bring his town forward to the attention of the citizens of our State.

Our late brother was unable to attend many of the sessions of the Senate during the session of one thousand nine hundred and one, by reason of illness, but the members of the Senate who were present on that memorable occasion during the spring of one thousand nine hundred and one, when he came

to attend a meeting of our body for the purpose of delivering a speech concerning one of his old school boy friends, will always remember the calm and dignified speech he delivered while practically standing upon the brink of the grave.

Senator Kemerer departed this life during the recess of the Senate; and the large attendance of the members of the Senate at his funeral was remarkable. It showed the worth of the man as well as the esteem in which he was held by his fellow members.

His family relations were of such a kind, true nature that it was a pleasure to his many friends to watch him in the intimate circle of his immediate family.

He fulfilled the duties of a Christian gentleman to the letter and many acts of Christian kindness were performed by him without the knowledge of the world.

Senator Kemerer has been taken from his friends, but his memory will still survive. The State lost by the death of Jacob B. Kemerer a faithful citizen and a valued servant.

Mr. DANNER. Mr. President: It becomes my sorrowful duty in my official capacity as the successor of my deceased friend, the late Senator Jacob B. Kemerer, to pay my humble tribute to his memory. Of his services, courteous bearing, and faithfulness in this chamber, I leave for his associates to speak.

Senator Kemerer was my personal and political friend, and I learned to know him intimately as an honest man, a politician whose aim was to promote the welfare of the public, rather than of party, his country rather than self.

His characteristics were of a broad and generous nature, inherited from vigorous, pious, and open-hearted parents.

Senator Kemerer was born December 21, 1842, at Center Valley, Lehigh county, and was the eldest son of the late Benjamin Kemerer, a merchant, and his wife, Mary Bachman

Kemerer. The family came from Germany, Jacob Kemerer, the late Senator's grandfather, having been one of the early settlers of Center Valley.

The early childhood days of Mr. Kemerer were spent at Freemansburg, Northampton county, where his father engaged in boat-building, rope manufacture, and canal transportation. In 1848 the family moved to Philadelphia where the father became a member of the mercantile firm of Rex, Kemerer & Company, and in which city the son mainly acquired his academical education, graduating from the Central High school with the class of 1861.

Not long afterwards Mr. Kemerer took up his residence at Bethlehem, and in 1865 was married to Miss Amanda J. Seem, daughter of Joseph Seem, of that borough, and where he continued to reside until the final summons came.

The deceased Senator is survived by his widow, and one son, Mr. Albert G. Kemerer, who has been honored by the treasurership of his town.

For a number of years Mr. Kemerer was engaged with the firm of H. B. Claflin & Company, the large wholesale house of New York city. His educational and business training led him into a liking for the legal profession, and he diligently pursued the course of legal studies with that brilliant lawyer, U. J. Wenner, Esq., and who later became a judge in the territory of Utah. In 1876, the centennial year of our nation's independence, Mr. Kemerer was admitted to the bar, and soon enjoyed an active and lucrative practice.

Mr. Kemerer's public spirit and foresight led him to project and assist in carrying to successful accomplishment the acquisition of large tracts of land adjacent to the borough, in their being built up, and which are now large and valuable adjuncts to the town.

His sterling worth, integrity and devotion were recognized by his fellow citizens, and they insisted upon his public ser-

vice, and from 1880 to 1897 he served almost continuously as councilman, solicitor and chief burgess, serving in the latter capacity for a period of six years.

He always rendered ready and valuable service to his party in the primaries, conventions, elections, and on committees, having been several years a member and chairman of the county committee, and a member of the State committee. He was also a member of several fraternal organizations: Independent Order of Red Men, Knights of Pythias, and of the Order of Elks. From 1887 to 1899 Mr. Kemerer was associated with Mr. Clarence A. Wolle in successful partnership transactions in real estate and fire insurance.

From this brief recital it is evident that the life of our deceased brother was a busy one, and withal honorable. But he did not shrink from labor or shirk a duty. He loved labor and gloried in achievement. As a lawyer, his brothers at the bar well knew the service he gave his client, and what care, exactness, ability and courtesy he ever displayed. He enjoyed the confidence of his clientage, his fellow members, and, not least, that of the court.

In 1898, without solicitation on his part, of which fact I have personal knowledge, he was nominated practically without opposition, to represent Northampton county in the Senate of the great State of Pennsylvania, but after the first session of his term the hand of affliction was heavily laid upon him, and he was not able to fully nor adequately perform his duties as Senator. This to him was a heavy cross, a great grief, for it was at variance with his whole course of life.

He was always so careful, conscientious, willing, and efficient in service and duty, but at last the hand faltered, wrecked by suffering and weakness. So, like a martyr at his post, a soldier on the firing line, he had to fall in the course

of duty. Although his demise was not sudden, he suffered in twilight and in darkness for months and in the bosom of his family he sweetly passed away.

A touching scene was that at the close of his life. It was his wish and prayer when the light of day was banished from his sight that his vision might be restored, even but briefly that he might again look upon the loved ones of his family circle. The All-merciful Father answered the prayer, the heart-crying wish was gratified, and in the golden afternoon preceding his death, he called his wife, her mother, his son and his wife and little grandson, to his bedside, and lovingly gazed upon them with vision undimmed, saying, "he saw all of the family group," and for ten minutes there was gladness and joy, even in the shadow of death. And then the good man relapsed into unconsciousness,

"Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams."

Mr. STOBBER. Mr. President: Jacob B. Kemerer, the subject of these resolutions, and myself entered this body at the same time. My acquaintance with him dated from that time, and though brief, it enabled me to watch his public career and note with what fidelity he performed the responsible duties he owed to his constituents of Northampton county, a constituency that had implicit trust in his ability and worth; for, by the votes of the citizens of Bethlehem, his home, he was intrusted with positions of great responsibility since 1880. How faithful he was to that which was intrusted to him can best be judged by the action of the people in calling him up higher and electing him to represent them in this body.

His integrity and honesty were never questioned, and this is saying much in this time of criticism, jealousy and vituperation.

But he has left us. He has gone to that bourne from whence no traveller ever returned. He might now repeat with Southey,

My hopes are with the dead! Anon,
My place with them will be,
And I with them shall travel on
Through all futurity;
Yet leaving here a name I trust
That will not perish in the dust.

We mourn his loss. Let us emulate his virtues and profit by the life he lived. The highest encomium that I can pay to his memory is when I say that the Commonwealth has lost a faithful legislator and the people an honest man.

We all remember when Senator Kemerer appeared for the last time in this chamber, his frame racked by sickness, his vision dimmed, knowing full well that

“Though time his bloom was stealing,
There was still beyond his art—
The wild flower wreath of feeling,
The sunbeam of the heart.”

That feeling was exercised when he cast all political animosities to the wind and voted for the confirmation of a neighbor and friend though a political opponent. Such an act of true friendship exemplified the character and greatness of Senator Kemerer. My heart warms and gladdens as I recall the scene. His leading characteristic, universally acknowledged, was kindness and tenderness. He brought comfort to those around him. He followed the instincts of a true and generous nature without ostentation, and he was successful in the province where God had placed him. Can such a man die? No! He has crossed the valley of the shadow of death, but he is not dead.

“As the bird to its sheltering nest
 When the storm on the hills is abroad,
 So his spirit has flown from this world of unrest
 To repose on the bosom of God.”

Yes! he liveth. Who of us will be the first to follow him,
 Providence wisely conceals. Let us be prepared for the call
 and exclaim with Pope,

The world recedes! it disappears!
 Heaven opens on my eyes! my ears
 With sounds seraphic ring!
 Lend, lend your wings! I mount! I fly!
 O grave! where is thy victory!
 O death! where is thy sting!

Mr. DEWALT. Mr. President: On the beautiful banks of the Lehigh there is situated the ancient and historic borough of Bethlehem. In that ancient town there is what is known, in the German language, a plot called “Godes Acre,” in other words, “God’s Acre,” and upon that plot there are the graves of those who have died in many, many years past, since Bethlehem was first founded. You find, in turn, in that plot the remains of those who were the red men of this country, and then became christianized, and were followers of the Moravian Church—from the early days of this first settlement the inhabitants of that ancient borough have had their bones placed in this last resting place. The remarkable feature of this burial place is that there is no distinction of race or class in marking the places of those who therein rest. At each grave there is simply placed a mark, not a towering monument or headstone, but an unostentatious slab with a simple engraving thereon, giving the name of the departed, his birth and the date of his death. It is a grand tribute to the belief of the old Moravian Church, of which the late Senator was a member, that when we are dead we are all alike, equal before God.

The distinction that men may attain during their short careers in this life, after all, in the sight of God, amounts to nothing, and there can be nothing so touching, in my recollection, as the fact that when I have gone to this last resting place of those who are not known in high distinction, in place or power, but known as Christian men and women, that each one receives from those who were his friends and is rendered the same simple token of observance.

I understand, in this "God's Acre" there rests the body of our late brother Senator, and the very fact that he is there is emblematic of his character. His life, in its entirety, was an exemplification of honesty and simplicity, and I doubt not, that had he been consulted as to his last resting place, and as to the memorial to be placed above his tomb it would have been just what he received, a simple stone with a simple token of inscription. I believe, too, when I recollect the tributes paid to this man's character, and the kind sentiments he bore in his heart, that there was another Christian principle inculcated in his heart, in his life, that was this, "Peace on earth and good will toward men."

I was intimately acquainted with the late Senator Kemerer, and if there was ever a man in my community who exemplified, by his life, this great Christian precept of "Peace on earth and good will toward men" I can with sincerity say it was our late distinguished friend.

They have at this place, too, in the ancient borough to which I have referred, another touching custom: When they have been informed that one of their neighbors or friends has gone the great journey, they rise in their simplicity, and in the greatest solemnity proceed to the highest pinnacle of the church tower and there play the solemn ritual for the departed. They play it on the trumpets and trombone, and call to heaven not in a spirit of gloom, but in the greatest sorrow, that one has gone from their midst. And I say, fur-

ther, be our pretensions of grief accompanied by trumpet blasts or not, they are what we believe to be the just tribute to our late lamented friend.

There is one other thought, in conclusion, and that is this, that when that great trumpet shall sound for us all, and that day of final reckoning comes, when each shall render his account, when the ledger shall be balanced and the debit and credit side is fully made up, I have no fear in my mind, from this man's character that there will not be a larger credit than debit, in fact, I know from his gentleness, his honesty, his manliness, that the credit side will be so large that the gracious God, in his magnanimity, will say, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Mr. HERBST. Mr. President: I first met Senator Kemerer at the opening of the session of one thousand nine hundred and one. It then scarcely needed the trained eye of the physician to see that the inexorable clutch of an incurable malady was laid heavily upon him, and that his days were numbered. Almost totally blind, with body weakened and racked by suffering and pain, it is superfluous to say that the Senator Kemerer I knew must have been far different from Senator Kemerer in health, with mental faculties clear, with bodily vigor unabated, and with ambition buoyant.

Death is rarely a welcome visitor, come when he may, or in whatever guise; still, to one borne down by blindness and pain, dissolution may furnish a grateful release, even though life's plans may be uncompleted, and all its hopes and ambitions as yet unrealized. This no doubt was the Senator's condition when he peacefully passed to the great beyond, at an age when still many years of usefulness might have been before him.

Senator Kemerer, on the few occasions that I met him, impressed me, above all, as a kindly, good natured, friendly man; one full of the "milk of human kindness." Such men

make and hold friends, and his career amidst his neighbors proves this. When a candidate for public office he always, in his home city where best known, ran far ahead of his ticket. This shows that he possessed

"That best portion of a good man's life,
His little, nameless, unremembered acts
Of kindness and of love."

The tears dropped on the bank of flowers which covered his casket, and the grief-stricken countenances, told all too plainly how deeply his loss was felt among his own people.

His fidelity to his friends was strikingly illustrated in one of his last public acts, when he was led into this chamber to vote for the confirmation of his life-long friend, though political opponent. I have often thought what a blessed thing it is that, as the shadows of life lengthen, and the inevitable summons draws nearer, we become less rancorous in our partisanship, less bitter in our political prejudices, and can see more of the good in everything and in everybody. A Democrat after the straightest of the sect, he was also broad minded and liberal, and, above all, a patriotic American.

Having served a thorough business apprenticeship before he studied his chosen profession, he became on this account, frequently, a doubly safe counsellor.

During our brief acquaintance I found him to be an intelligent, quiet, dignified, amiable gentleman. He was a good citizen, a faithful public servant, and an irreproachable Senator.

A long and patient sufferer, "after life's fitful fever" may Senator Kemerer have found the rest vouchsafed those who have toiled diligently and faithfully. For

"Honest toil is blessed, and he who works most faithfully has
earned the sweetest rest."

The PRESIDENT. The question is on the adoption of the resolutions offered relative to the late Senator from Northampton county.

The question being,

Will the Senate agree to the resolution?

It was unanimously agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT.

Mr. DANNER. Mr. President, I move the Senate do now adjourn.

Mr. CALPIN. Mr. President, I second the motion.

The question being,

Will the Senate agree to the motion?

It was agreed to.

Whereupon,

The Senate adjourned to meet at nine o'clock P. M., Monday, March second, one thousand nine hundred and three.



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